

VZCZCXYZ0021
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHDM #2007/01 1221251
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 021251Z MAY 06
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8689
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 5913
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT 3785
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 2289
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH 6992
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 0941
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 4366
RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM 0587
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL//CCPA//
INFO RUEHNC/AMEMBASSY NICOSIA 6731

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 002007

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR PA, NEA/ARN, INR/IC/CD, INR/S:STHIBEAULT AND
JMCCARTER, VOA NEWS CA, NEA/PPD:CBOURGEOIS, DBENZE AND
AFERNANDEZ, IIP/G/NEA-SA RWINCHESTER
WHITE HOUSE FOR NSC
CENTCOM FOR CCPA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [SY](#)

SUBJECT: Damascus Media Reaction: US Report on Terrorism,
Fundraising for Palestinians, Lebanon, Iraq, Iran (5/2)

11. Summary: Syrian papers cited a statement by Dr. Imad Mustafa, the Syrian ambassador in Washington, that the "US State Department report on terrorism is a new link in a series of reports that the United States issues for political reasons against those who do not agree with it or go along with its policy regarding its claims about terrorism."

Dr. Mustafa said: "With regard to Syria, the report is contradictory. While the US Administration continues to classify Syria among the countries that sponsor terrorism, it clearly indicates that Syria was not involved in any terrorist act. It also clearly indicates that Syria differentiates between so-called terrorism and resistance, which it considers a right of nations. Yet the US Administration says Syria supports organizations that the United States labels as terrorist, such as Hizbollah, HAMAS, and Islamic Jihad." He added: "From this premise, we can judge the report as a flagrantly biased political document."

Dr Mustafa said: "I personally believe that such bias does not help the United States focus its efforts on the fight against real terrorism. On the contrary, it keeps the US policy hostage to the interests of the extremist policy." He criticized "Washington's disregard for the terrorist acts (state terrorism) that Israel practices against the Palestinians, particularly targeted killing...."

Papers also reported that HAMAS has thanked Syria for the assistance Syria has offered to Palestinians and their elected government. "The Syrian donation came in spite of the efforts of the US Administration to besiege the Palestinian people for the benefit of Israel and all the pressure it applies to achieve this goal on the regional and international levels," the HAMAS statement said. HAMAS called on Arab and Islamic nations to adopt practical measures to enhance and increase support for the Palestinian people and government, to reject US pressures and to launch official and popular campaigns to achieve this support.

End of summary.

12. Selected Headlines:

"The Palestinian National Resistance Movement [HAMAS] thanks the Syrian government and people for the assistance they have offered to the Palestinian people and their elected government" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 5/2)

"The Syrian fundraising campaign in support of Palestinians continues. Foreign Minister Walid al-Moua'llem: We don't fear anybody in supporting the Palestinian people" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 5/2)

"A US senator [Joseph Biden] calls for fragmenting Iraq on a sectarian basis. Explosions in Baghdad and Basra" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 5/2)

"Former Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Miqati: Conspiring against Syria is conspiring against Lebanon itself. Nabih Berri, Speaker of the Lebanese Parliament: Somebody is trying to summon Israel back to Lebanon" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 5/2)

"Israeli occupation continues bombing the Gaza Strip. Occupation troops kill a Palestinian woman in her bed in Tulkarm" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 5/2)

"Iran protests US threats to UN SecGen Annan. On the eve of the Paris meeting, Larijani [Iran's top nuclear negotiator]: Halt of uranium enrichment is illogical" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 5/2)

13. Editorial Block Quotes:

"Ignored Facts about Terrorism"

Muhammed Khair Al-Jamali, an editorialist in government-owned Al-Thawra, commented (5/2): "The US Administration, through its annual report on terrorism, tries to blame others for its failure to realize its own objectives.... The US State Department report on terrorism accused Syria and Iran of supporting terrorism without giving a single piece of evidence to prove these accusations....

"Apart from leveling unsubstantiated or unfair accusations against Syria, the report deliberately ignores a number of basic facts about terrorism: its definition, the best ways to fight it, Syria's real cooperation against it, and Iraq's role in fanning its flames....

"The United States and Israel have always refused to define terrorism because they want to classify resistance against occupation as terrorism.... Washington and Tel Aviv also insisted on a security approach to terrorism and refused to address its root causes....

"If we add to this the fact that many American officials have testified that Syria has saved the lives of many Americans as a result of its past cooperation, and the fact that the major US policy mistake of invading Iraq provided fertile soil for the growth of violence and terrorism, the US State Department report will be exposed as a report lacking any credibility, meant only to cover the mistakes of American policy by blaming their repercussions on Syria and every country that refuses to surrender to the logic of dictates, arrogance, and threats."

"On the National Day of Support for Palestinians"

An unsigned editorial in government-owned Al-Ba'th on (5/2) reads: "The donation campaign is a new opportunity through which Syrians show the extent of their commitment to fateful Arab issues.... For decades Syria has sponsored the plan of

resistance and opposition.... This subjected Syria to pressure and conspiracies. But all pressure has failed to force Damascus to change its position....

"The Syrian fundraising campaign activates the role of the Arab public in general to break the siege that Israel is imposing on Palestinians.... Danger surrounds Palestinians depending on American and European aid and Israeli tax transfers.... Arabs and Moslems must be responsible for funding Palestinians....

"Foreign funding of Palestinians must come to an end.... It is very costly for the Palestinian cause and Palestinian rights, as the experience of the post-Oslo agreement has shown...."

Seche